



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2021 | 2:00 p.m.

VIA CONFERENCE CALL

Toll Free: (315) 904-1069
Conference Code: 829 862 231#

MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Cherry, Chair
Angela Sweeney
Capt. Eric Nielsen
Henry Fawell
Julian Boykin
Justin Meighan
Leonard Raley
Stuart Page
Tom Sadowski
Secretary Kelly M. Schulz

MEMBERS ABSENT

Aaron Tomarchio
Sen Cheryl Kagan
Del. Kris Valderrama

MMP STAFF

Tom Riford
Robert Scherr

COMMERCE STAFF

Sherri Diehl
Lutisha Williams
Carolyn Hammock
Liz Fitzsimmons

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I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Karen Cherry at 2:00 p.m. Administrative Assistant, Lutisha Williams with the assistance of Tom Riford called the roll for attendance. Quorum was established. Karen Cherry welcomed everyone.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Approval of Minutes from March 24, 2021

Chair, Karen Cherry asked for any comments and a motion to approve minutes from March 24, 2021. Mr. Julian Boykin moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Angela Sweeney seconded. No oppositions. Minutes approved and accepted.

b. Financial Report

The financial update presented by Mr. Leonard Raley for the period ending on May 31, 2021. They are as follows:

On the revenue side:

- Total partner contributions paid in FY2020, is \$572,000.
- Partner contributions paid in FY2021 (to date): \$800,001.

On the expense side:

- To date, total expenses \$1,697,995.01. This reflects expenses for media placements, research, web development, etc.
- To date, ending balance: \$4,712,862.74

Expenses planned:

- FY2021 major planned expenses include \$2.5 Million in the media plan. Google and social advertising is projected to be \$775,000.
- Total Media Expenses (FY2021) *to-date*: \$1,303,568.76

Chair, Karen Cherry asked for a motion to approve and accept the financial report. Mr. Tom Sadowski moved to approve the financial report. Mr. Julian Boykin seconded. No oppositions. Financial report approved and accepted.

III. SECRETARY OF COMMERCE UPDATE

Secretary Kelly M. Schulz provided the MMP Partners and Board Members an update from the Department of Commerce. She thanked the partners for their continued support. As it relate to the COVID State of Emergency, she communicated to the Board that the Governor has lifted it effective July 1, 2021.

In regard to the COVID-19 Relief Program – the Department of Commerce has been working in the last year, which was focused primarily on small business assistance. All funds should be distributed by June 30, 2021. These were the funds allocated to Commerce and other Agencies in response to the Governor’s Relief Act of 2021, which was the Governor’s premiere legislation and a bipartisan effort. This relief included \$10 Million – specifically for grant up to \$9,000 according to Secretary Schulz for businesses that did not collect sale and use taxes – served to compliment sale and used tax credits for (Restaurants and Hotels).

There was also grant assistance to businesses in the amount \$500,000 for online sales or to help their employees to telework and there will be additional \$5 Million allocated in FY2022 to continue to supplement those businesses who want to do business in a different way. The Restaurants, Hotels and Telework funds was distributed to all 23 counties and Baltimore City. All funds have to be distributed by June 30, 2021. The Relief Act also provided \$5 Million for additional funding to the Arts organizations and individual artist. Also, \$8 Million to support commuter and shuttle bus service. VOT businesses assistance program funds in the amount of \$10 Million is being allocated.

Funding was also made available for the tourism marketing efforts by utilizing the Destination Marketing Offices (DMO).

She mentioned that last month an announcement was made regard ALUM, an Australian firm that the Governor and Commerce met with 2 years ago to their visit to Australian. This firm is opening a new facility in Frederick Maryland. They are projecting to create more than 1500 new jobs. Capital Electric is expanding its headquarters in Prince George’s County and the opening of 3 new foreign trade offices in the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

The Maryland Film Office has recently announced two major films and TV projects coming to Maryland – HBO: We Own This City and FX: The _____ By the Door. The return on investment for those filming opportunity is really significant for our local jurisdiction.

Without hearing any questions for Secretary Schulz, Chair, Karen Cherry proposed that the next MMP Board meeting in September be held in-person. Board members agree.

IV. MARYLAND BUSINESS CLIMATE SURVEY UPDATE

Mr. Christopher Summers introduced Dr. Richard Clinch, Director of the Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore provided background information of the Maryland Business Climate Survey (MBCS). Dr. Clinch communicated that the MBCS performs quarterly survey of 250 businesses – annual survey of 1,000 businesses; leading “mobile” sectors of Maryland economy consisting of manufacturing, transportation/logistics, finance, professional and business services and firms with 10 or more employees.

The BCS started in 1994 and was funded by BGE. For the next 10 years (1995-2005) with what was called the Maryland Business Research Partnership which discontinued in 2005 due to a lack of funds. The BCS restarted its efforts in 2010 – 2012 with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) and the Maryland Public Policy Institute helped to restart again in 2018.

According to Dr. Clinch, the survey focuses on five specific areas:

- Business Performance and Expectation
- Maryland’s Overall Business Climate
 - Ratings and Things needed to improve Maryland
- Maryland’s Business Environment
 - Taxes, Regulations, Labor Market, Infrastructure, Quality of Life
- Maryland’s Labor Market and Labor Force
 - Labor Supply, Demand, and Talent Pipeline
- Firm Demographics

Mr. Christopher Summers acknowledged the survey sponsors who are currently, SC&H Group, Howard County Chamber of Commerce, Merritt Companies and Rockville Chamber of Commerce.

After the presentation, Mr. Leonard Raley requested a copy of the presentation and Mr. Tom Riford indicated that he would email the Board Members and MMP Partners this presentation and encourage those partners to support this work if feasible.

V. MMP Updates:

Updates are presented to the Board from MMP Consultant, Robert Scherr; Nicole Tapiero, Senior Account Executive from HZ; Greg Abel, Founder & CEO from Abel Communications.

a.) Partnership and Contract Updates

According to Robert Scherr, we are 28 partners strong. The following updates on MMP Partners:

- As of 2021, MMP have secured three new partnerships for a total of \$63,334
 - Eastern Watersports
 - High Rock (Marketing Strategy Company)
 - Weller Development (1-year commitment)

However, there were several loses. This year MedStar and Howard Bank discontinued their commitment to the tune of \$150,000. Apparently, a lot of Howard Bank and MedStar's resources has been put toward COVID-19 efforts.

- 2021 Pipeline
 - Becton-Dickinson
- 2021 Renewals at \$1.8 Million
- 2022 Renewals at \$368,330
- 2023 Renewals at \$1.65 Million from existing partners

b.) Marketing Report Update (HZ)

According to digital representative Chris B. from HZ, regarding the digital campaign performance from the audit that was conducted. MMP has seen 206 million of total impressions – 206M persons who have seen the Open for Business ad, which does not include the print placements. Of the 206M impressions there was a total of 1.2 million clicks; 1 million total visits to the Site. The impact of these

impressions compared to the fall 2020 campaign, there was a 32% increase in direct source traffic to the website; 131% increase in new users and an increase of 94% in total conversion volume.

In regard to the Forbes insert, two more companies have been added to the list of advertisers:

- St. John Properties
- BGE
- USM
- Transamerica
- Howard Hughes
- T. Rowe Priice
- Tradepoint Atlantic
- Weller/Port Covington (half)
- Peterson Companies (half)
- Orsted

According to Nicole Tapiero as it relate to the Open for Business website audit. The focus is 5-key audience segments on the site, which consist of: (1) domestic, (2) business, (3) international business, (4) site selectors, and (5) workforce/instate retention. The narrative and content hierarchy is to tell the story of place; provide audience segments quick paths to relevant content that is prominent and engaging; create a sense of urgency by appealing to hearts/minds through success stories and facts; tell lifestyle stories; focus on rationale of key segments by delivering more content that details various industries, showcasing the breadth that Maryland offers; delivering deeper funnel content at bottom of page for those that are highly engaged, specifically through highlighting resources and next steps and reinforcing that Maryland is the best place to be by including a summary field guide of data and information.

A question posed from Chair, Karen Cherry to Nicole Tapiero asking what's the deadline for the Forbes insert? Which was directed to marketing director, Sherri Diehl to respond. Ms. Diehl's response was that Forbes is doing all of the sales and they are taking submissions – insertion orders for ads through mid-July. The actual placement will not appear until late-October, early November.

c. Abel Communications (PR Report)

As presented by Founder/CEO, Greg Abel the aim as it relate to public relations is to increase national awareness, highlight Maryland businesses, promote Maryland's key industries and serve as an extension of the MMP team. With the earned media coverage, Abel Communications has done work with Tradepoint Atlantic and some the investments they've made in Baltimore and the infrastructure specifically down and around the point area.

In addition to media coverage, opportunities with national media publications with a focus on trade with a couple of key trade sectors specifically supply chain, media, healthcare media and tech.

According to Allison Bears, the opportunities with Bloomberg for the COVID Economic Recovery and Maryland's Leadership (feat. Michael Siers, Lead Economist, Maryland Department of Commerce); the Wall Street Journal, the Evolution of the Tech Workplace for Women (feat. Ellison Anne Williams, CEO of Enveil); Site Selection Magazine, investing in Baltimore, investing in business: Critical Infrastructure and Development (feat. Tradepoint Atlantic, Weller Development, North Development).

d. Executive Director's Report

Tom Riford shared with the MMP Partners and Board members of sub-committee work with Abel Communications to help out with opportunities with public relations.

VI. Adjournment

The business meeting adjourned at 3:16p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Septemer 2021, exact date TBD.

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